

APPENDIX C. AGENCY RESPONSE LETTERS

PHONE CONVERSATION

Michael Shirley/Logan Simpson Design

Date: 09-05-02

Time: 1:26

With: Jim Threadgill, Glendale Union High School District

Project: Grand Avenue at 55th, 67th and 75th.

Project #: 00-5179

Phone: 623.435.6689

Conversation: Mr. Threadgill called inquiring about construction sequencing on the upcoming Grand Avenue Projects. He requested information on when the 51st Avenue project would begin. His concern was that if the 43rd, 51st, 55th, 67th, and 75th Avenue projects overlap, that this overlap would greatly impact school buses. He also stated that it would impact not only the Glendale Union High School District, but would impact all school districts in the west valley.

I contacted Michael Phillips (ADOT West Valley Field Office) and Carlos Lara (ADOT Deer Valley Field Office) to confirm the current construction status of 43rd and 51st. Carlos indicated that due to a utility issue that 43rd and 51st were behind schedule and construction would not begin until January 2003. This would mean that construction would overlap at all five intersections.

I then called Mr. Threadgill back to pass along this information. I also gave him Mark Bonanís (ADOT Phoenix District Construction) phone number if he had further construction-related questions. He ended the conversation by stating that he was in favor of the projects and felt that they would definitely help the traffic operations in the west valley, but that during construction it was going to be a mess.



Maricopa County

Environmental Services Department

Albert F. Brown, Director
2001 North Central, Ste 595
Phoenix, Arizona 85004-1950
Phone: (602) 506-6623
Fax: (602) 506-5141
TDD: (602) 506-6704

August 29, 2002

Mr. Michael Shirley Senior
Environmental Planner
Logan Simpson Design
Inc. 51 West Third Street,
#450 Tempe, AZ 85281

Dear Mr. Shirley:

This is in response to your letter of August 26, 2002 regarding environmental assessments for the Maryland Avenue Overpass at 55th Avenue/Grand; 67th Avenue Overpass at Northern Avenue/Grand; and Olive Avenue Overpass at 75th Avenue and Grand Avenues.

To ensure you have the earthmoving permits required by the Department, please contact Larry Spivack at 602-506-6739.

In addition, contact the Cities of Phoenix, Glendale and Peoria's water and wastewater departments regarding abandonment and reconstruction of water and sewer lines. If any affected land is within unincorporated areas, please contact the MCESD Water & Wastewater Division at 506-6666.

I wish you great success with these projects.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Al Brown", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Al Brown Director



October 3, 2002

Michael Shirley
Project Environmental Planner
Logan Simpson Design, Inc.
51 West Third Street, Suite 450
Tempe, AZ 85281

RE: 67th Avenue Overpass at Northern Avenue and Grand Avenue
Project No. STP-060-B(007)

Dear Mr. Shirley:

This is in response to your letter of August 26th, which sought comments on three draft environmental assessments for grade separation projects on Grand Avenue. I have reviewed the draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the above referenced project and have the following comments:

The project as designed will significantly impact Valley Metro transit operations within these corridors, especially for transit riders with physical disabilities. This was noted Jim Dickey's letter to you on March 1, 2001. At present two transit routes operate in the project area, the Yellow Line and Route 67. The Yellow Line runs along Grand Avenue between Peoria Avenue in Peoria and downtown Phoenix. Rt. 67 runs north and south along 67th Avenue between Bell Road and Buckeye Road. Passengers seeking to transfer between the two routes can do so at the intersection of Grand Avenue and 67th Avenue.

The Preferred Alternative identified in the EA would preclude transfers between Yellow Line and Rt. 67 by imposing significant walking distances between the two routes. If the grade separation is built as recommended in the EA, a transfer to the Yellow Line northbound bus would require walking approximately 600 feet west along connector road "A" to Grand Avenue. A transfer to a southbound Yellow Line Bus would require walking approximately 1200 feet north along connector road "B" to Grand Avenue. These walk distances would impose a significant hardship on elderly and disabled riders, especially during the summer when outdoor temperatures are typically over 100 degrees.

Not only does the proposed grade separation impact transfers between the Yellow Line and Rt. 67, it would also impact future transit service in this corridor

including a possible extension of Rt.80 (which currently terminates at 59th Avenue. Extension of Rt. 80 could occur in the foreseeable future as Glendale expands their transit service in response to their successful sales tax election. A route extension in this corridor could provide service to the Coyotes Hockey Arena and Cardinals Stadium that are being developed in the vicinity of Loop 101.

The EA concludes that the proposed grade separation will impact transfers between the 67 and the Yellow Line but suggests that the Yellow Line could function as an express in this corridor. The problem with this assumption is that it does not take into account the current rider ship characteristics. Rider ship data from the FY2001 Performance Management Analysis System (PMAS) Report shows that 33.1 percent of Yellow Line riders and 35.5 percent of Rt. 67 riders transfer somewhere along the route. This would indicate that the route predominately draws rider ship with a high transfer habit.

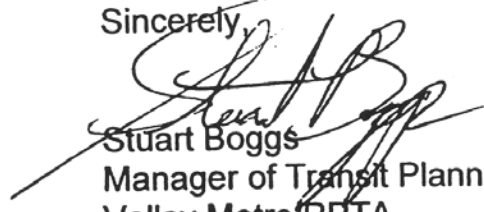
A reconstituted Yellow Line that functions as a limited stop express would not serve the needs of present riders. Such a service is more oriented to commuters seeking to access employment centers in central Phoenix. It would not address the needs of current riders that work outside the central business core, or are seeking to access other support services (medical, education, social services, etc.). These riders would be forced onto east-west or north-south routes that could require one or more transfers to accomplish the same trip.

Valley Metro continually examines its rider ship in order to better tailor services to the needs of its riders. One such research tool is the On Board Origin and Destination Survey. The 2001 survey shows marked differences in the demographic characteristics of local bus and express bus riders. Express bus riders generally have more education (15.1 years vs. 13.0 years), have a higher income (percent with income greater than \$20,000/yr 95 percent vs. 52 percent), and are older (44.8 years vs. 33.8 years). 68 percent of express riders said they would drive themselves if bus service were not available, this compares with 10 percent of local bus riders. Removing local service along Grand Avenue would thus adversely impact the transit dependent.

An alternative that could preserve the ability to transfer between these routes would involve development of station stops on Connector Roads A & B. Yellow line buses would access the stops by way of the connector roads. This option would require both north and southbound Yellow line buses to travel across the new overpass in order to return to Grand Avenue after accessing the new stops. Land acquired for construction of the connector roads and the 67th Avenue overpass would provide room for the development of ADA accessible stops and associated bus pullouts that would allow for transfers with Rt. 67 buses. While this option would add to the design and construction cost of the 67th Avenue overpass, it would preserve a transfer opportunity that will continue to grow in importance as Glendale expands its transit network and service frequencies.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on this project. We look forward to working with you to address these issues. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our comments please do not hesitate to contact me at (602)

Sincerely,



Stuart Boggs
Manager of Transit Planning
Valley Metro/RPTA

cc: Jim Dickey, Deputy Executive Director. Operations & Planning, Valley Metro/RPTA



Arizona Department of Transportation

Intermodal Transportation Division

206 South Seventeenth Avenue Phoenix, Arizona 85007

November 8, 2002

Dick Wright
State Engineer

Victor M. Mendez
Director

Mr. Stuart Boggs
Transit Planning Manager
Valley Metro/RPTA
302 North First Avenue, Suite 700
Phoenix, Arizona 85003

**Re: Grand Avenue (US60) at Northern/67th Avenues
Transit Facilities
NH-060-B(007)B
060-MA-153 H5601 01 C**

Dear Mr. Boggs,

This letter is in response to your October 3, 2002 letter related to the transit facilities at this site. You stated that this project as designed will significantly impact Valley Metro transit operations with these corridors, especially for transit riders with physical disabilities. ADOT acknowledges that this project will impact transit operations at this site and we have coordinated with RPTA to mitigate your concerns.

As a part of the coordination meeting held September 17, 2002, between ADOT, RPTA and City of Glendale transit staff, there were several improvements identified to be evaluated by the ADOT design consultant. The improvements included the following:

- > Construct a new bus bay along northwest bound (NWB) Grand, north of the intersection.
- > Move the existing northbound 67th Avenue bus stop, south of Frier Drive, to a point north of the Connector B tie-in to 67th Avenue and construct a new bus bay.
- > Replace the existing northbound 67th Avenue bus stop, north of Northern Avenue, with a new bus bay on the east side of Connector D.
- > Construct a new bus bay on the west side of Connector B, just south of the new intersection with Northern Avenue.

These improvements along with a new bus stop sign, south of Frier Drive on the west side of 67 Avenue, to be installed by City of Glendale transit department, were suggested to mitigate RPTA's concerns identified at the meeting. After further evaluation and coordination with RPTA staff, the four new bus bays have subsequently been included in the current ADOT design project.



2001 Award Recipient

We look forward to working with you in the near future on these issues. Please contact me at (602) 712-8167 if you have any additional questions.

Regards,



Trent Kelso, P.E.
Project Manager

Cc: Jim Romero, ADOT
Scott McKenzie, Aztec
Bob Coons, City of Glendale
Leisa Burdine, City of Peoria
Linda Grafil, LSD

Attachments: None

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